



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

If American experience is any guide, British economists and publicists will be slow to base many hopes upon such a policy as that which is now being proposed. Next to the slavery question itself, no other question has been the occasion of so many sectional jealousies and class struggles; and no other question has come so near disrupting the Union itself as the tariff question. In the reviewer's opinion, it is about an even chance whether such a system as that proposed in the volume before us would lead to a closer integration of the British Empire or set at work the forces which will sooner or later cause its complete disintegration.

T. N. CARVER.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

The History of Liquor Licensing in England, Principally from 1700 to 1830. By SIDNEY and BEATRICE WEBB. London, New York, and Bombay. Longmans, Green, and Company, 1903. — viii, 151 pp.

For some time Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb have been engaged in a study of English local government in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and they propose to publish the results of their investigation during the present year. Meanwhile they have issued their chapter on liquor licensing, adding to it a short introduction which gives it a certain degree of historical completeness. The authors believe that this little work will prove useful in view of the present position of temperance reform in England, especially because it contains an account of the suppression without compensation of a large number of licensed houses during the eighteenth century. In this belief, they are certainly justified; for the publication of Rowntree and Sherwell's work on *Temperance* a few years ago and the extensive discussion of the relation of liquor consumption to industrial efficiency have aroused in England a wide-spread and practical interest in the question of temperance legislation. Much of the present controversy hinges on the problems of compensation and local or central control, and, with their usual predilection for precedent, English reformers will doubtless welcome this historical account of two hundred years of experimentation. Leaving aside the early manorial and municipal liquor regulations, Mr. and Mrs. Webb take up their subject with the introduction of national measures at the close of the fifteenth century. At the very outset, they call attention to the fact that the regulation of the traffic, from the first, was not based on any abstract theory, but on the prac-

tical necessities of the state. The preambles of the statutes were filled with complaints against the disorder, crime, and idleness caused by drunkenness, and the legislators were dealing with the liquor traffic as an enemy of social peace. But, as the authors point out, these efforts were constantly thwarted by the utilization of the business for purposes of revenue, and by the governmental policy of encouraging the great brewing and distilling industries. Parliament began the work of regulation in 1495 by an act which empowered any two justices of the peace to close up a public house or take the surety of the keeper for his good behavior. The licensing system was introduced in 1552 by a statute which required all ale-house keepers to hold a license from the justices of the peace. By implication, the local magistrates were invested with discretionary powers as to the conditions of the license, subject, of course, to royal proclamations and the strong administrative supervision of the Privy Council, which lasted until broken down by the Civil War. Under James I, an elaborate system of strict control was devised, but at the end of the seventeenth century a period of general laxness began, and the justices apparently made no attempt to keep down the number of houses. This conclusion of the authors is entirely borne out by Hamilton, in his *Devonshire Quarter Sessions*, a work which they have apparently not used. Drunkenness increased enormously and the government encouraged the liquor industry by several favorable statutes. In 1702, Parliament, finding that the license system was "a great hindrance to the consumption of English brandies," so far repealed the law as to permit distillers to open retail houses at will, and the result was "a perfect pandemonium of drunkenness." The excesses resulted in a reaction, and in 1729 and 1736 Parliament adopted a strong restrictive policy of high license and heavy taxation on the retail trade. The law was so stringent, however, that it defeated its purpose; the consumption of liquor increased, and the government lost its revenues. In 1743, Parliament passed an act designed to secure a revenue from the manufacture and requiring liquor dealers to have licenses issued at a small fee. This measure was followed by a number of minor acts limiting the discretion of the justices and directly regulating the conditions under which the trade was to be carried on. The result was a decrease in illicit business, a rapid growth in the number of licenses, and a notorious laxity in the control of the traffic generally. Wide-spread debauchery was again followed by a reform movement, which has apparently received no attention from other historians of the period. This movement, initiated in 1786-87 and supported by a royal proclamation against vice and immorality, in-

cluded the adoption, by benches of magistrates in different parts of the country, of such devices as the refusal of new licenses, the withdrawal of licenses from badly conducted houses, and in some cases, even the establishment of a system of local option, all without the slightest idea of compensation. This policy steadily decreased the number of licenses in the face of a growing population and was accompanied by a reduction in the amount of crime and social disorder. The practice of restriction, however, soon awakened a violent opposition based on philosophic radicalism and a general dislike of the monopoly which the system fostered. A series of Parliamentary investigations beginning with 1816 resulted in a report against the control of the liquor business by the justices of the peace. Disregarding entirely all questions as to the social effects of their legislation, Parliament in 1830 passed a bill providing that any rate-payer could open his house as a beer shop without a justice's license or control on payment of two guineas to the local excise office. The effect was instantaneous; in less than six months 24,342 new beer shops were opened and, according to Sydney Smith, the sovereign people was in a beastly state. Crime and social disorder spread rapidly, and even "the optimistic prophecy that an increased consumption of beer would be accompanied by a permanent reduction in dram-drinking was completely falsified" (p. 119). In spite of protests from every side, the Whig doctrinaires refused to return to the restrictive policy. At this point, Mr. and Mrs. Webb close their research, but they append a general survey of the recent legislation. The "free-trade" policy continued in force until 1869, when a modified license system for beer houses was re-established and licensed premises again brought under the control of the justices of the peace, subject to certain limitations on their discretion in refusing licenses. In 1874 the closing hours were fixed by Parliament; in 1886 the sale of liquor to children for consumption on the premises was forbidden, and in 1901 all sales to children were required to be in sealed vessels. The authors end their account by calling attention to the fact that the present tendency of liquor legislation is in the direction of greater control by local government authorities. They defer general conclusions until they have made more exhaustive researches. The book is a valuable contribution to the history of the liquor traffic and displays a scientific calm sadly needed in the discussion of temperance questions.

CHARLES BEARD.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.